



The National Fire Plan

FY 2001 Programs in Texas



Overview

The National Fire Plan implements program activities across the landscape, to respond to the severe wildfires of 2000, reduce their impacts on rural communities, and enhance firefighting capabilities in the future.

In the Forest Service Southern Region, which includes Texas, the Plan serves to strengthen the firefighting organization, expand hazardous fuel reduction and management activities, and enhance economic development opportunities in rural communities. In 2000, 2,673 fires burned 214,742 acres and destroyed 70 homes in Texas. Estimated National Fire Plan allocations to Texas include (\$ in thousands):

Firefighting		Rehab and Restoration	Hazardous Fuel Treatment	Forest Health Projects	Community Assistance				TOTAL
Preparedness	Facilities				State Fire Assistance	Volunteer Fire Assistance	Economic Action Programs	Comm'ty & PrivateLand Fire Assist..	
2,009	35	0	1,630	111	693	394	20	1,162	6,054

Firefighting Resources

Staffing the most efficient organizational level to provide prompt initial attack suppression on wildfires.

In Texas, 2 additional permanent positions and 17 additional term positions in the National Forest fire organization are being filled in FY 2001. These positions will build the most efficient level of organizational readiness on the National Forests. A tractor plow unit is being upgraded and added to the fleet at a cost of \$100,000. A capital investment of \$35,000 is being made in the Decatur Helipad and associated facilities. In addition, through the Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP), excess Federal property is loaned to state forestry agencies and their cooperators for wildland and rural community fire protection. The total value of FEPP inventory used by fire organizations in Texas is about \$75 million.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction

Targeting fuel management and reduction on high priority areas, especially wildland-urban interface areas.

- 56,631 acres of hazardous fuel reduction treatments have been accomplished and entered into the National Database as of July 27, 2001.
- Additional planning and NEPA work to prepare for fuel treatments in FY 2002 and beyond was

scheduled for more than 80,000 acres in FY 2001.

Community Assistance

Enhancing community capacity to reduce wildfire risk and expand local economic opportunities.

- State Fire Assistance provides \$693,000 through the National Fire Plan, in addition to \$417,000 in base funding. The program will support multiple Hazard Mitigation projects; Firewise demonstration sites in 20 counties; Firewise Communities Training sessions; production of a bilingual Traveling Display; and development of a Neighborhood Wildfire Defense Team Handbook.
- Volunteer Fire Assistance provides \$394,000 through the National Fire Plan, in addition to \$262,000 in base funding. The program awards grants to address the needs of Texas's 2,081 rural volunteer fire departments, for training, equipment, protective materials, and supplies. In 2000, 88 volunteer fire departments received grants, among 221 that requested assistance.
- Economic Action Program focuses on high fire risk areas mostly in the wildland/urban interface areas, where conventional prescribed burning is not feasible. The program will help support a region-wide assessment of fuel loads and burned areas, to guide planning of longer-range strategies to reduce fuel loads and minimize risks to people and property in Texas.
- Community and Private Land Fire Assistance will provide support to communities in burned and impacted areas. Grants will support community planning, pilot projects and activities to mitigate the impacts of past fires, reduce the risks of and prepare for future fires, and explore economic opportunities that arise from the National Fire Plan, such as establishment of dry hydrants, Stewardship planning and fuel management, hazard mitigation, and utilization of wood products from removed fuels. Over \$950,000 funded reimbursements for ranch and farm fences lost in the FY 2000 fire season.

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